

February 21, 2004

Date: February 11, 2004

Subject: CONGESTION MITIGATION AND AIR QUALITY (CMAQ)
ADVISORY COMMITTEE

Location: Rooms 112 and 113, NHDOT
2:00 PM

Attended By:

Members:

Councilor Raymond Burton - Chairman
James Moore, NHDOT (for Jeff Brillhart, NHDOT)
Jim Marshall, NHDOT
Mike Fitzgerald, NHDES (for Commissioner Mike Nolin, NHDES)
Quazi Bari, SNHPC (for Manindra Sharma, SNHPC)
Cynthia Copeland, SRPC
Tim Murphy, SWRPC
Kerrie Diers, CNHRPC
Mike King, NCC
Jason Rasmussen, UVLSRPC (for Tara Bamford, UVLSRPC)

Members not Present include Stephen Williams, NRPC, Kimon Koulet, LRPC and Kathy Laffey, FHWA

Others Present:

Jack Ferns, NHDOT	Michael Pillsbury, NHDOT
Ram Maddali, NHDOT	Alaina Bailey, NHDOT

Notes on meeting:

Councilor Burton called the meeting to order at 2:00 PM. Councilor Burton introduced each Committee member present as well as the NHDOT staff.

Approval of Minutes:

Councilor Burton asked for a motion to approve the April 3, 2002 Advisory Committee meeting minutes. Motion was moved by Jim Marshall and seconded by Cynthia Copeland. By unanimous decision the motion passed.

Update on Electronic Tolls (Statewide 13122) Project:

Ram Maddali gave an update on the Electronic Tolls project. Late last year, the NHDOT made a request to the CMAQ Committee through a letter poll, which was accepted, to increase the CMAQ portion of the electronic tolls project from \$6.5 million to \$15.8 million, of which \$7 million had been programmed with Turnpike funds. He explained that this request was made because NHDOT was facing a potential lapse of CMAQ funds. This lapse is due to the fact that funding programmed for the Nashua Rail projects is being delayed as the funding issue is being reviewed through the Judicial System. Mr. Maddali noted that the NHDOT followed this procedure because of time constraints and noted that the Electronic Tolls project is moving forward. Jim Moore noted that the first electronic toll will be on the Spaulding turnpike and is expected to open in the spring of 2005. He mentioned that this toll will be a low-speed electronic toll and high-speed electronic tolling is being investigated for the turnpike system.

Cliff Sinnott stated that this project has MPO support, but he had an issue with the way in which the polling was conducted. He noted that the majority of Committee members did vote to allow this change without holding a meeting to discuss the change. He suggested that we should develop threshold criteria that would necessitate meeting for those project changes.

Tim Murphy and Cynthia Copeland both echoed Mr. Sinnott's concerns.

Overview of current applications:

Councilor Burton reviewed the CMAQ timeline. According to the schedule, in February the Committee would hold a meeting to discuss procedures (the current meeting). In March the project presentation would occur and by April 1st Commissioner Murray would have a final list of Committee recommended projects that will be submitted to the Governor's Advisory Commission on Intermodal Transportation (GACIT) by April 15th. After approval by GACIT around May 15th, these selected projects will be added to the TIPs and STIP, and the process will be complete by September 2004.

In response to a question on the amount of CMAQ funding available, Mr. Maddali stated that we currently anticipate approximately \$8 million in Federal CMAQ monies per year. Assuming level funding for a two-year cycle, that makes \$16 million Federal or \$20 million Total dollars available for programming in the years 2005-2006. Mr. Maddali said that this available money is assuming that all the money programmed for Nashua Park-and-Ride and the Nashua Rail projects will be utilized. Mr. Maddali said that not knowing the results of the litigation and in anticipation of the possibility of large CMAQ projects being delayed, there could be a potential CMAQ funding lapse. Mr. Maddali asked to keep the funding issue in mind and the necessity for CMAQ projects with good air quality benefits. He added that there are several projects that could be considered for inclusion in the CMAQ program: Dover Exit 9 Park-and-Ride, Salem to Manchester I-93 Park-and-Rides, Intelligent Technology initiatives, and Hampton One-Way tolls which have significant air quality benefits and could be considered for funding.

Councilor Burton noted there are currently 30 CMAQ applications to be reviewed.

Cliff Sinnott asked of the previously mentioned projects, would they be submitted at some time before the beginning of the next CMAQ round. Mr. Maddali said that he wanted to bring up the possibility of funding these projects with CMAQ money, should there be a need for good CMAQ projects. He pointed out that with the results of the Nashua Rail lawsuit being unknown, the Committee might have to consider additional projects to avoid lapses. He noted that the current set of applications tended to have small benefits and there is a need to look at good air quality benefits projects.

Mike Fitzgerald emphasized the importance of air quality. He noted that in the last conformity cycle, there was a need for projects with good air quality benefits to help meet Conformity requirements. He suggested that there should be significant consideration given to air quality in the project rating.

Councilor Burton asked for clarification about the conformity process. The process is as follows: NHDES samples air quality in various locations. Since New Hampshire has had air quality violations, NHDES is required to create a State Implementation Plan (SIP), which creates air quality budgets for transportation systems using atmospheric models. In order to receive Federal transportation money, we need to prove that the planned transportation systems do not exceed this budget.

Cynthia Copeland asked for clarification about the amount of money available for the current round of CMAQ and Mr. Maddali said that it is \$20 million Total (\$16 million in Federal funds).

Jason Rasmussen inquired about the funding available for attainment areas of the State. He noted that historically 5% has been available for attainment area projects, though no CMAQ money has been previously spent in the Upper Valley Region. Mr. Maddali noted that the Committee has in the past treated attainment area projects the same as regular projects at the time of project rating. Should the project make the cut for funding, at that time they would look at the 5% criteria. Councilor Burton asked if this procedure had been reflected in previous minutes and Mr. Maddali stated that the Committee discussed the process each round. Councilor Burton noted that we have always spent all the money allotted to us for CMAQ programs.

Jim Marshall suggested that if attainment areas are allowed to put in CMAQ applications, we should follow through with the regular procedure for these projects. He noted that in the last CMAQ cycle, a Littleton project was highly rated and was close to being funded. He also noted that a New Hampton Park and Ride was funded with CMAQ money.

Cynthia Copeland asked about the CMAQ process and the One-Way toll project. She asked of the process of including Statewide or large-scale projects, and who would solicit these projects. Would the RPCs be asked about these projects? She stated that she had no process outline, just trying to understand how the process would work.

Cliff Sinnott stated that the regional projects are likely to have a match problem. Typically, regional projects have had NHDOT to supply the match. He suggested that if the projects are not solicited from the communities that we should not ask them to provide match money.

Councilor Burton pointed out that it is important to use up all the CMAQ money, whether with local or regional projects. He stated that we need to make sure to get good projects. He recommended that we need to be careful with Communities not to get their expectations up, like in the Ten Year Plan, only to have the project take many years to bring to fruition. He noted that the Regional Planning Commissions are out there doing a lot of work in this CMAQ process.

Jim Marshall moved to use the following procedure: Attainment area projects should be treated as any other project in the CMAQ process. If projects in attainment areas get selected for funding, then we need to evaluate the total cost of these project(s). Up to 5% of the CMAQ budget, pending SafeTEA changes, could be used in attainment areas. In the discussion phase of the motion, Tim Murphy asked for clarification of the motion. Mr. Maddali noted that this procedure was consistent with the previously used method. Mike King noted that large projects can increase in price and inquired what would happen if the attainment area project surpassed the 5% limit. Mr. Maddali stated that for a large price increase, the applicant would be required to request the money from the Committee. At that time, the details could be worked out as to how to program the project with the 5% per year funding. Mr. Sinnott seconded the motion, which passed unanimously.

Finalize meeting dates and selection process to be used by the Committee:

Councilor Burton then discussed the dates for the Public Hearing meeting and the subsequent selection meeting. Mr. King noted that with 30 applications, giving applicants 10 minutes each would take five hours. Mr. Sinnott noted that the five hours did not include any slop time. Councilor Burton noted the need to have enough time to let applicants present, though it would be good to move the presentations along. He noted that it would be a full day of Presentations.

After discussion of available dates, Monday, March 8th at 2:00 pm was set up as the Public Hearing date. Councilor Burton suggested that we would need an hour-long break for supper that night. The follow up meeting for project selection was scheduled to take place Monday, March 22 at 10:00 am.

Cynthia Copeland asked if the Committee would score the projects the day of the presentations or score the projects later and fax in the results. Mr. Maddali stated that we would be handing out scoring sheets the day of the presentations and we would like to get them back by the following Wednesday in order to have enough time to process the results.

Mr. Maddali asked about the Committee's preference for the format of the Public Hearing. The Committee decided to block off time slots by RPC, who could then invite the applicants to give presentations.

Other Business:

Jim Marshall noted that he had asked Jack Ferns to attend this meeting. Jack Ferns will be the Director of the newly created Division of Intermodal Transportation, and will possibly be the NHDOT CMAQ representative in the future. Councilor Burton hoped that even though these intermodal systems will be a separate division, the various transportation systems would still be

on equal footing. He was also concerned that this change would not diminish the ability to retain Federal monies for these other modes. Jack Ferns noted that even though these systems will be a separate Division, the Bureaus would remain the same. He thought that this change would actually strengthen these groups.

Alaina Bailey noted that the application packets are available for the Committee members.

Tim Murphy moved to adjourn the meeting, and Mike King seconded the motion. The meeting adjourned at approximately 3:00 PM.

Submitted by:
Alaina Bailey

cc: Committee Members
C. Murray
J. Moore
A. Sanborn
R. Maddali
M. Pillsbury